



Aspen Institute Case Writing Competition, 2012

Creating Business Value through Employment Practices for Low Wage Workers

With generous support from The Hitachi Foundation, The Aspen Institute is seeking new teaching cases that demonstrate how businesses achieve performance gains through innovative employment practices benefiting their hourly and/or frontline workforce. This competition will reward the best new business teaching case that demonstrates the positive relationship between employment practices for low wage workers and business performance.

Submission Process

- All entrants will submit a **proposal no longer than three pages** containing the case idea, the company to be profiled, teaching objectives of the case, and courses in which the case may be used.
- Proposals should include an appendix with proof of the willingness of the company to be profiled for the case, in the timeframe allotted for completion.
- Proposals will be reviewed and up to four will be selected as “finalists” to write their proposed case.
- Finalists will be awarded \$1,000 and have three months to produce their case.
* ***All finalists are required to submit a draft of their case on May 21, 2012. Each draft will receive feedback from the judges that can be incorporated before the final submission is due.***

Schedule for submissions:

Tuesday, January 31, 2012- Competition announced, call for submissions

Monday, March 19, 2012- Proposals due

Monday, April 2, 2012- Finalists notified

Monday, May 21, 2012- First draft cases due for review

Monday, June 4, 2012- Feedback on drafts provided back to finalists

Monday, July 9, 2012- Final cases due

Friday, July 20, 2012- Winner announced

Finalist Submissions

- Each finalist will submit a first draft to be reviewed by the judges by May 21, 2012.
- All finalists' drafts will receive feedback from judges and an additional month will be given before the final submission deadline. Failure to meet the draft deadline will result in disqualification.
- Final submissions will be scored by the judges and the winning case writer will be awarded an additional US \$5,000. The winning case will receive consideration to be featured in The Pioneer Employer Case Competition at the Net Impact conference in Fall, 2012.
- Proposals should be sent electronically to miguel.padro@aspeninstitute.org or by mail to:
Aspen Institute Case Writing Competition
c/o: Miguel Padro
477 Madison Avenue, Suite 730
New York, NY 10022
- **Questions** can be submitted to miguel.padro@aspeninstitute.org

Applicants

- Applicants can apply individually or as a team.
- All submissions must have a business faculty lead charged with guiding the case writer(s) in producing a case that will meet classroom teaching objectives.
- Students are welcome to participate but must submit a letter from their faculty lead confirming their involvement. It is highly recommended that the faculty lead write the teaching note.
- Judges are not allowed to submit cases or advise finalists in any capacity other than the official draft review.

Criteria and Rules

All case material must:

- be presented in English and **include teaching notes.***
- **be anonymous.** (*Your name or the name of your institution should not be mentioned on any case materials.*)
 - **Do not put any identifying material on anything you want the judges to see. Any material containing identifying information will be separated out by the contest administrator before your submission is sent to the judges.**
- deal with real enterprises and/or organizations.*
- focus on a recent situation (after January 2008).*
- Cases should be long enough to provide a robust learning experience with clearly defined educational goals.

- Cases should contain attachments and citations where appropriate.
- Multi-media presentation of cases is acceptable.

* Cases that do not meet these conditions will be eliminated from the competition.

Evaluation Criteria

The judging panel will apply the following evaluation criteria:

- **Content:** The relevance and integration of employment practices for low wage/ frontline workers as a core strategic business consideration; the ability to create a meaningful learning experience.
- **Form:** The style of writing; quality of the presentation; clarity and relevance of data.
- **Teaching Notes:** Teaching notes should include as a minimum the following issues: teaching objectives; courses in which the case may be taught; possible questions for class discussion; any other comments that might be of assistance.

Publication

The Aspen Institute Business and Society Program will publish the winning case on CasePlace.org and announce the winning case to our network of business faculty at more than 150 business schools around the world. Ownership of the case will belong to the case writer. The Aspen Institute Business and Society Program and The Hitachi Foundation will retain full publishing rights to the case.

Scoring

- **Case Quality** (Content and Form) accounts for 70% of overall weighting. This is judged on the basis of ability to satisfy the educational objectives and student expectations; the accuracy of the research and data; the manner of presentation of the data; the writing style; the educational effectiveness of the case; versatility of usage; the summary of the case; and the abstract.
- **Teaching Notes** account for 30% of overall weighting. These are judged on the basis of immediate issues; underlying issues, key points or highlights; indication of level of analysis (graduate, undergraduate, executive,...); suggested student assignment; suggested additional readings or references; possible discussion questions; potential uses of the case (marketing, strategy,...); analysis; suggested teaching approach; computer support; audio-visual support; and the proposed session plan.

Judges

The judging panel will be comprised of representatives from academia and business.

Resources

A. Examples of companies realizing competitive advantage through innovative employment practices for their low wage/ frontline workers can be found at:

[The Hitachi Foundation Pioneer Employers Initiative](#)

[Caseplace.org](#)

[Winning Workplaces](#)

[PHI](#)

****Examples are provided for descriptive purposes only. These do not represent an exhaustive list of companies with innovative employment practices for low wage workers, nor should they be considered recommended case subjects. We encourage you to choose a case subject you find compelling and illustrative.***

B. Sample case structure for an effective teaching case:

- Statement of the problem/intro
- Background on company/industry
- Development of employment practices at company
- Ramifications in terms of turnover, employee health, etc.
- Dilemma or crisis
- Decision that must be made